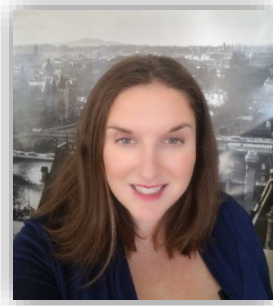


REPORTS –PROGRAM STAFF

Erin Acland
Keeper of the Archives

The highlights of 2025 were completing our off-site storage move, hosting two fantastic Summer Students, and receiving a number of grants.

Off-Site Storage Move and Set-Up

The arduous process of leaving Iron Mountain, our long-term off-site storage company, and moving to Transcona Memorial United Church (TMUC) was told in some detail in last year's report. In this year's report, I'll add only brief updates. The move out of Iron Mountain and into TMUC was completed on October 28, 2025, and went smoothly. The ordering, delivery, assembly, and placement of shelves and other necessities were completed in December 2025 for both of our leased rooms in TMUC. For the first time in thirty years, the Archives has a large amount of empty shelf space. For an Archivist, this is very exciting!

Starting at the end of 2025, I started on a long project of "mapping" and briefly reviewing our off-site record boxes. Some of these boxes had not been seen by Archives staff since 1996. Over a third of our boxes (the literal container which houses the records) are falling apart and need to be replaced. This process of mapping the location of the records, checking their physical and organizational condition, and re-boxing and re-labelling, has allowed me to better understand what records we hold. This process is expected to take until late Summer 2026.

Reference and Outreach

In 2025, I received 394 requests for reference assistance, records management help, or discussions about donations and transfers of records to the Archives. In addition, 39 in-person researchers visited the Archives. In total, there were 1,787 points of contact with researchers.

I presented to a number of different groups and classes, including three Indigenous history classes at the University of Winnipeg and University of Manitoba; a graduate level class at the U of M on archives management; an introduction to archives for students from the Centre for Christian Studies; a grant writing workshop for the Association of Manitoba Archives; a gathering of Pensioners/ Retired Ministry Personnel; and a gathering for a Community of Faith. Additionally, I worked with two U of W history professors to create an assignment based on archival records.

After ten years in use, in June 2025, the Archives' website was retired. The security for the website was outdated and could not be easily upgraded. Additionally, the website had become a target for malicious actors who continuously sought to gain access to the "back-end" of the website. While none of these attacks were successful, it felt like only a period of time before they would be, which left the Archives and its users in danger. For now, a significantly smaller version of our website has been added to the existing website of Prairie to Pine Regional Council.

Unfortunately, the shutdown of the Archives' website coincided with an upgrade to the University of Winnipeg's phone lines, which unexpectedly and inadvertently terminated my long-held phone number. The Archives has acquired a new phone number through the United Church's system.

Reconciliation

Between September 2024 and August 2025, 255 textual record files related to "Home Missions" were digitized. In future, these files will be digitally repatriated to the appropriate First Nations and Indigenous Communities. This project was mostly funded by the United Church of Canada's Bringing the Children Home initiative. It will continue in 2026.

Grants

From mid-May to mid-August, the Archives hosted two terrific Summer Students. We received a grant worth \$8,224.65 from the Government of Canada-Young Canada Works in Heritage Organizations granting program, which covered just under 75% of the costs for one of our Summer Students. We also received a grant worth \$15,000 from ENDOW Manitoba and the Association for Manitoba Archives, which covered 100% of the costs for our second Summer Student, and provided an additional \$3,000 directly to the Archives.

Funding of \$8,500 was provided by the Manitoba government from its Heritage Grants Program for the Archives' assessment and inventory of off-site archival records project.

The United Church of Canada's Make Room for Women grant contributed \$857.16 towards the purchase of a new document scanner.

*Respectfully submitted,
Erin Acland, Keeper of the Archives
Prairie to Pine Regional Council*



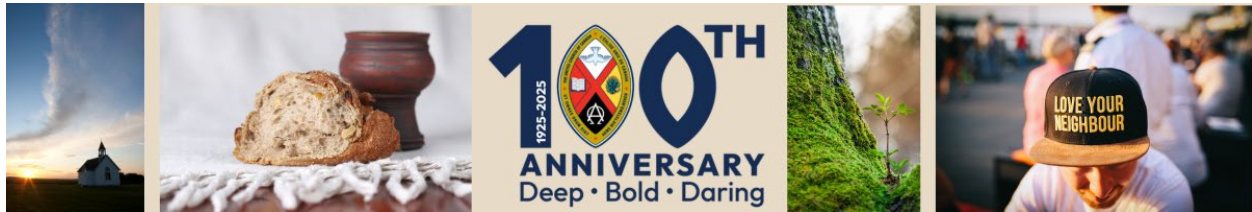


Julie Graham
Regional Minister:
Justice and Communications
Northern Spirit, Living Skies, and
Prairie to Pine Regional Councils

Because I was on medical leave from October 2025 to March 2026, this report doesn't reflect all of the vibrant and dedicated ministry that has taken place throughout the Regional Council. In truth, it never does. There are thousands of local, shared-community, and Regional events every year.

Communications

Deep thanks to Cherry and YAAY Council members who kept the website up to date. Please remember to have a look at the many excellent Young Adult and Youth reflections and event reports throughout the year, and to follow YAAY's Facebook and Instagram.



The United Church's 100th anniversary

It's impossible to capture the sheer number of joyful local events. Thank you to all who started working early and often with the call to post events to our special calendar, and who brought such creativity to this hundredth birthday.

People's history

Writer and historian Gayle Simonson very generously shared with all three Regional Councils a weekly series of short stories designed for newsletters, bulletins, and more. She used a very short word count to paint vivid pictures of the people and the faith that has shaped our church from before its birth to the present day. [Please see the collection here](#). Thank you, Gayle.

Here From the Beginning exhibit: 100 years of Black stories in the United Church

On Emancipation Day, August 1, 2025, this grassroots travelling exhibit was launched in Edmonton before travelling to General Council 45 in Calgary (image, above). Designed to highlight stories of Black United Church leadership that have often been hidden from our history, it will tour the country for the next two years.



I have been honoured to sit on the planning team as a staff support. We look forward to welcoming this exhibit to our Regional Council, possibly in early September 2026. There is a lot of intentional flexibility in how a community of faith and community partners can work with this exhibit; its intent is to surface local stories and Black leaders, and we are free to add activities that help do that. Please be in touch with the Equity and Diversity Committee if you would like to host.

Western Intercultural Ministries series on ethnocultural communities and histories



Your Western Intercultural Ministries Network regularly offers 90-minute online workshops on intercultural ministry praxis, and for the 100th, they decided to surface stories that are often little known and marginalised within wider church histories. Diverse ethnocultural communities have been part of the church from before its birth, and WIMN has so far offered spaces to learn about Black, Filipino, Chinese, and Korean histories and contemporary ministry. The series will continue

in 2026. For more on this network's ministry, please see its report to the regional meeting. And please book November 19-21, 2026, in Edmonton for the in-person WIMN conference, with a focus on joy and resistance in intercultural worship arts. Many thanks to Dambar Khadka for his service on the WIMN Executive. This is your reminder that this very diverse and Spirit-ed group meets bi-monthly, takes an active shared role in WIMN events, and welcomes new members.

Media

Because of my absence, I do not have a complete record of all media hits, but there are over 15 stories that I know of for 2025. Locally, newspapers and radio stations that have fought to survive in a very difficult financial climate continue to feature communities of faith, sometimes through interviews and feature articles. When we work publicly with our communities, it is noticed. If you need some ideas for pitching a story or keeping an active relationship with local media, I would love to talk.

The Regional Council continues to be a member of the Winnipeg Free Press Faith Council. Many thanks to Loraine Mackenzie-Shepherd and to Theresa Moysie before her, as our official representative alongside several community of faith representatives. I am in regular touch with John Longhurst at the Free Press, and with several writers at Broadview magazine. When a local reporter who has done an original piece is identified, I always write to thank them. I also work closely with the General Council media officer, Lori-Ann Livingston, who is a gift to this important work. It has been very helpful to have this position active again after a multi-decade hiatus.

Justice, solidarity, service

Palestine

None of us wanted to think that throughout 2025, we would still need to confront a genocide in Gaza and greatly expanded and violent ethnic cleansing in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

Many in Prairie to Pine responded with words and presence to national calls for a full Canadian arms/military goods embargo with Israel. Participation in many local solidarity events. Mennonites in MB offering exceptional leadership. The Women Wage Peace Winnipeg chapter has been offering a relationship and conversation space, [including at public events like this one](#).

The Palestine Land Exercise is being used extensively in Living Skies as an introduction to hidden history, and has seen Indigenous and Palestine-Canadian/ Arab-Canadian participation. There is interest in expanding to other Regions.

Church members often show up to local protests and solidarity events, but sometimes not as “official church”. That presence is just as valid as official presence, but how do we respectfully ensure people know we’re showing up as the church?

Affirming work: Equity and Diversity Committee



Please take the time to look at this committee’s report for this meeting. Continuing work on unconscious bias, connecting with ministries in the Affirming process

Preparing for Pride was held in May 2025, creating a space online for people across the three Regions and beyond to share their ideas and hopes for Public, Intentional, and Explicit United Church presence at local Pride festivals and parades of all sizes. Another will be held on May 12, hosted for multiple Regions by the Equity and Diversity Committee.

The committee hosted an excellent unconscious bias workshop in late 2025, and encouraged participation in the 14 March National Affirming PIE Day, where creative Prairie to Pine goodness was on offer.

We also celebrate new Affirming ministries in 2025!

Brookdale United Church in Brookdale, MB; Forrest United Church in Forrest, MB: thank you for your public witness to Christ’s all-embracing love.

Right relations/ TRC commitments



I want to start by honouring the enormous and often pain-filled, courageous efforts of the First People who advocated for searches of the Prairie Green and Brady Road Winnipeg-area landfills for the bodies of Mercedes Myran, Morgan Harris, Rebecca Contois, and Ashlee Shingoose. I also thank the many church members who joined advocacy and direct support efforts under the direction of the families. This was advocacy that should never have been necessary. But it was necessary.

Two years ago, we might have thought it impossible that the search would ever happen, let alone succeed in bringing these sisters home. The search for Ashlee continues as of April 2026, and may we keep her loved ones, community, and the search teams in our prayers. As Premier Wab Kinew noted in April 2026, the search of the Prairie Green landfill cost one tenth of the price tag quoted by the previous provincial government- and dignity is in any case beyond price.

Every May, the people of the Regional Council are called upon to honour Red Dress Day (May 5) and Moose Hide Day, May 14. The Sunday before June 21 (National Indigenous Peoples Day) is Indigenous Day of Prayer in the United Church. These are all spaces for us to show up locally, and to support any Indigenous-led spaces we can. Yet another example is church support for the annual Treaty 1 gathering in Winnipeg. Thank you to the many communities of faith who show up in support and offer education and community spaces throughout the year. You carry truth and reconciliation for the whole church.

There are indications that the Blanket Exercise is becoming more available to churches, after a long hiatus, and I will be talking with KAIROS about this.

Finally, I want to express gratitude for the generosity of Indigenous leadership, without whom all learning spaces and relationships would be impossible. Keewatin Circle members, Sandy Saulteaux Spiritual Centre, Knowledge Keepers, Elders, community representatives: chi miigwtech, kinanskominawaw.

Climate justice/ crisis

Please see the separate report from the small group that carried forward the 2023 regional meeting proposal on fossil fuel divestment. That proposal led to two solid and intense years of work [that are detailed here](#) and included an excellent ecumenical event. Huge thanks to Lori Stewart, Karen Tjaden, and Lynda Trono for their leadership, and to those who came to the monthly learning spaces. At this point, the work will likely go in a different direction because of very limited uptake. There are many resources in the church for climate crisis engagement, including For the Love of Creation and many local initiatives that

urgently need church support. As we devote more and more spring communication space to wildfires across the West, and struggle immensely with Canada's fossil fuel use, we are called to solidarity and uncomfortable discipleship.

Working with the national church



General Council 45: I attended as a tech team volunteer, and it was lovely to meet our commissioners and volunteers in this shared national space. Here they are!

A lot of our connecting with the General Council includes shared staff spaces for information horse-trading and community. Networks that include Prairie to Pine participation and are part of my work include Guaranteed Livable Income advocates, Climate Justice, Refugees, and the United Network for Justice in Palestine and Israel. Ministry from all of these

networks and from our church's many national and global partnerships appears in our Regional newsletter, and also in specialized national newsletters you're encouraged to subscribe to!

2026-2027 work

Here from the Beginning display travel in Prairie to Pine, fall 2026.

National Church Office Administrators Network in October 2026, where we hope to again see good Prairie to Pine participation.

Western Intercultural Ministries Network in-person conference, 19-21 November, Edmonton

Understanding and complying with the new MB disabilities/ accessibility legislation, which is now the standard for the entire country. Currently, our website is not in compliance, and there is also much more the Region can and should do with this inclusive legislation.

Extensive website overhaul, for compliance and for better reflection of how we're using the sites. Cherry, Jamie Mackay and I completed the website five days before COVID began. It's long overdue for a navigation, accessibility, and design refresh. Constructive and detailed feedback on changes you want to see is always welcome!

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Graham, Regional Minister: Justice and Communications

jgraham@united-church.ca



Twila MacNair
***Staff Support to Young Adult
And Youth Ministry***

I have once again enjoyed working with the young leaders who volunteer on the YAAY Committee and those who volunteer as planners and leaders of retreats and other youth events in the region.

Please read the report from the YAAY Convenors to learn about the many varied events that have been planned for and by young people in our region over the past year.

Setting up mentoring partnerships between our experienced leaders and our new leaders was an important part of my work in the past year as we try to bridge a gap in leadership. A big thanks goes to both those giving and those receiving the mentorship!

In April, I attended meetings in Toronto with many colleagues, where we worked to create a strategic plan for the Toward 2035 vision. Young people, and ministry with young people, have been named as a priority in this vision, falling under the leadership pillar, among others. This ministry is now being referred to as "First Third Ministry," meaning ministry to and with people in the first third of their lives (children, youth, young adults, and families with children).

Our region has been strong for a long time in encouraging and supporting young people to take on and practice leadership roles in events that the regional YAAY Committee plans for youth. Many have gone on to fill leadership roles in communities of faith or the wider church and world. Will this well-oiled leadership model be able to continue in a changing world and a changing church? Typically, we've seen young people come through retreats as participants, then small group leaders, then planning team members, and eventually retreat coordinators, with some back-and-forth movement between roles, but generally with opportunities to build new skills in each new role undertaken.

I see wonderful potential in the young leaders coming up. At the same time, I worry about a gap between the experienced young adult leaders who've been sticking with us to keep events going and the young ones they've been mentoring. If the older ones move on before the younger ones are ready to do the planning, can we find creative ways to still run the events so the up-and-coming leaders can practice their leadership skills and eventually take on the planning? I hope so! The YAAY Committee and I will need support both in picturing new ways of doing things and potentially in adults stepping in and mentoring youth as they become ready to move up through the leadership ranks.

As one group of young leaders moves on to the next life stages and others sign on for another year with the YAAY Committee, please thank our amazing young people for the commitments they have made, and continue to make, to the work and life of our region.

Respectfully submitted,
Twila MacNair
Staff Support for Young Adult and Youth Ministry



Judy Hare
Pastoral Relations Minister

An exercise that I engaged in once at a gathering of staff related to Pastoral Relations work had each of us choose from among a compilation of videos and pictures (some with captions), one or two that might best depict how we were “experiencing” our ministry at that time. If I were to engage that exercise right now, I might choose a video of an experienced juggler who has people off to the side tossing in balls, assuming or hoping the juggler can handle the additional balls or assuming that: 1. the juggler has others to toss excess balls to or 2. hoping if some balls need to be dropped, the juggler has a way of discerning which ones can be let go of without causing too much damage Or, maybe I would choose a picture of a baseball batter using one of those automatic pitching machines with several people with remote controls with which they can adjust the frequency at which the balls are being sent out by the machine – faster sometimes and slower at other times. Both the juggler and the batter feel called to their role and find challenge and satisfaction in the experiences. Others looking at them may feel differently about how the balls, in both cases, are being managed.

The volume and pace of work in 2025-2026 Pastoral Year have been like both those experiences Slower at times, fast at others, and everything in between. No two days are alike, and rarely is the pace or content under the complete control of the Regional Pastoral Relations Minister. The work is becoming increasingly more responsive to current needs in a time of significant challenge, change and uncertainty, with a decreased ability to spend much time envisioning longer-range plans or putting associated timelines in place. Yet, that IS what we are being asked to do by the Toward 2035 initiative: slow things down and make some time in the midst of current activity to look and plan long-term.

When the evaluation of the 2019 restructuring happened recently, many indicated that they were not clear about the role of various staff, committees and commissions associated with the Regional and Denominational Councils. In reality, the work and titles vary from Regional Council to Regional Council.

The primary role of the Regional Minister for Pastoral Relations and Community of Faith Support in Prairie to Pine Regional Council is to resource and support the ministries of the following groups, whose work is highlighted in reports submitted by them:

- Pastoral Relations Commission and Liaisons
- Committee on Community of Faith Support
- Committee on Lay Ministry and Lay Leadership Support
- Committee on Ministry Personnel Support

I am EXTREMELY grateful to the dedicated volunteers who people these committees and the commission: their willingness to incorporate changes to policies and procedures and their flexibility in the scheduling of meetings and training sessions to best accommodate the schedules of governing bodies and/or Communities of Faith. I am also grateful for others recruited to assist with their mandates or those who are supported through their work: Pastoral Relations Liaisons, Pastoral Charge Supervisors; members of Ministry & Personnel Committees, Community of Profile Development Teams; Search Committees; Pastoral Care Visitors; Licensed Lay Worship Leaders; Sacraments Elders; active and retired Ministry Personnel; members of governing bodies; treasurers and ADP Liaisons. I am grateful to those who complete Statistics forms and self-assessments; those facilitating workshops and making themselves available to provide worship leadership by engaging in a formal relationship and/or placing their names on the Pulpit Supply Lists. ALL these people ARE the United Church engaged in mission and ministry within Prairie to Pine Regional Council, and I am truly grateful to have the opportunity to be part of the ongoing story we are creating together, a story now over 100 years in the making.

In addition to working with the committees and commission, a significant amount of time is spent doing technical work, such as drafting motions to suit particular contexts, tending to urgent, time sensitive or complex matters that require the coordination of more than one of these groups, interaction with other bodies or individuals within the church structures (The Regional Council Executive or Property Commission; the Vocational Minister; the Growth Animator; Conflict Resolution Facilitators; General Council staff with expertise related to our payroll or benefits system, Church Hub or our disability management system) or referrals to expertise beyond the church i.e. Mediators or Lawyers. We have a lot of people doing a lot of things within this United Church of Ours, and keeping track of “who does what,” and the policy and procedure changes that impact Ministry Personnel, lay employees and Communities of Faith, is part of what the Pastoral Relations Minister is called to do.

This year, in addition to engaging the regular work within the Regional Council with the Committees, Commission and Executive, I attended an in-person gathering of others doing Pastoral Relations work in other 15 Regional Councils- an opportunity that comes only once every three years, and my two Pastoral Relations Minister colleagues from Northern Spirit(Adam Hall) and Living Skies (Tracy Murton), who divided up some of the responsibilities of our Executive Minister, Shannon McCarthy, when she was on sabbatical from December 1, 2025 to February 28, 2026. My share included responding to any needs within the Prairie to Pine Regional Council that would traditionally require the support of the Executive Minister, and attending ZOOM meetings of the Senior Leadership Team, including the Executive Ministers.

I, along with others of our Regional Council staff, had the opportunity to gather with staff from across the United Church in Toronto April 8-10, 2026, to cultivate a common understanding and shared commitment to the vision and strategy of supporting Communities of Faith Toward 2035 (T2035), and develop some practical detailed plan related to the period from July 1, 2026, to December 31, 2027, addressing the strategies. I was part of the discussions focused on Property strategies and initiatives, and I found it fascinating.

A valued part of the work I am engaged in is the rare opportunities to connect with our Indigenous relations, especially those associated with the eighteen Communities of Faith known as Keewatin Circle. This year, I have been invited into a few conversations with staff from Indigenous Ministries and Justice attempting to identify ways to address some sensitive and complex employment matters, considering both settler church or government requirements and indigenous culture and practices.

Building trusting relationships is at the heart of “the ministry of administration and care” that I am called to do on behalf of, and with the people of Prairie to Pine Regional Council. I am SO looking forward to getting the opportunity to touch base with people in-person who will be attending the Regional Council meeting in Selkirk and tend to nurturing those relationships.

Respectfully submitted,

*Rev. Judy Hare, Pastoral Relations Minister,
Prairie to Pine Regional Council*

Regional Update, as of May 15, 2026

146 pastoral charges, including 18 Indigenous Communities of Faith and 128 non-Indigenous Communities of Faith, with significant areas of the Regional Council with limited paid accountable ministry leadership (Northwestern Ontario; southwestern Manitoba and the former Northland Presbytery)

The non- Indigenous Communities of Faith include:

11 collaborative ministries (23 pastoral charges; 24 Communities of Faith, 10 Ministers + 1 CDM & 1 in Search) – one Collaborative ministry arrangement involving two Pastoral Charges dissolved their agreement this spring; one new arrangement was recently approved but not yet posted for Search; two collaborative conversations are in process each involving two Communities of Faith and one beginning involving four Pastoral Charge -6 Communities of faith.

7 ecumenical shared ministries – 4 Anglican/United (Neepawa- in search; Souris – Anglican incumbent; Red Lake and Snow Lake-vacant -not looking); 1- E.L.C.I.C (Lutheran) -United (Lutheran Supply appointment); 1 Disciples of Christ/United Church (Disciples incumbent) and 1 Anglican/Presbyterian/Mennonite/United) - Mennonite incumbent); Thompson & Ignace ESM agreements recently dissolved by partners.

1 “Team” ministries of multiple staff (Trinity, Portage La Prairie 1.5)

0 Interim Ministries 0 amalgamations currently in process

3 Communities of Faith in 2 Pastoral Charges disbanded between June 30, 2025, and May 2026: Benito-Kenville; Ignace Anglican/United; 5-10 in process

43 Pastoral Charges (51 Communities of Faith) have been **without paid accountable ministry for a year or more** and have not yet or are not intending to engage the profile/search process (Lay-led by choice or default); includes **three communities of faith open only in summer months**

60 Lay people licensed as **Sacraments Elders** for 39 different Communities of Faith

22 **Licensed Lay Worship Leaders** as of May 15, 2026

15 Pastoral Charges are currently in pastoral relations processes (7 in **Profile Development** phase), and 5 vacancies posted from within P2P for **Search** on ChurchHub (1-FTE Collaborative involving two Pastoral Charges; 1- FTE Ecumenical Shared Ministry; 2 regular FTE; 1 part-time Supervised Ministry Education Learning Site); 1 FTE Collaborative approved involving two Pastoral Charges but not yet posted.

60 ministry personnel in Call or Appointment (44 in full-time employment and 16 in part-time positions), including: 6 retired Ministry Personnel in Appointment (1 in full-time; 5 part-time); 3 Candidates serving in Appointment at some point during pastoral year (all part time-one as SME) and 3 Ministers in Admissions Process (all in full-time employment)

4 Ministry Personnel on medical leave at some point during the pastoral year

+/- 50 Ministry Personnel (retired or in other appointments) in formal association Covenants (The Manual section I.2.5.3)

3 situations required the appointment of Conflict Resolution Facilitators; no formal complaints in process, no Reviews in process

82 Pastoral Charge requiring supervision at some point during the pastoral year due to vacancies, appointment of Candidates or Admissions ministers, medical leave, Covenanting services between July 1, 2025, and May 31, 2026 (Of the 55 Pastoral Charge Supervisors, 14 are lay people and 14 Pastoral Charge Supervisors had more than one Pastoral Charge responsibility).

TOWARD 2035: When asked whether their governing body or Community of Faith had engaged with materials provided by the General Council for these discussions, those registered for the Annual Meeting responded: 62-No; 43-Yes; 45-Don't know.

Indigenous Communities of Faith: 18 Communities of Faith served by 13 Ministry Personnel for some part of the Pastoral Year (one returned to retirement in December 2025; one Ministry Personnel passed away on April 30, 2026; one Ministry Personnel retiring in May 2026).





Shannon McCarthy
Executive Minister

Grace and peace to you in this time of challenge and possibility.

I write this report with deep gratitude for the leadership you, as members of this regional council, staff and volunteers, continue to offer in contexts that are often complex, demanding, and at times discouraging. You are holding communities together, tending faith in uncertain soil, and remaining present even when outcomes feel unclear. This is holy work—and it matters more than you may know.

As we spend time together at our Regional Council Meeting as Prairie to Pine Regional Council and reflect on our journey together in the life of The United Church of Canada, you will hear a lot about *Toward 2035*. It is not a program to complete or a problem to solve, but an invitation—a spacious, hope-filled invitation—to listen, to discern, and to imagine together what God is calling us to become as the United Church.

I know that for many of you, the daily realities of ministry in your context can feel heavy. Declining numbers, limited resources, aging buildings, and shifting cultural landscapes can make it difficult to see beyond immediate concerns. Yet *Toward 2035* gently calls us to lift our eyes—not to ignore those realities, but to see them within a wider horizon of God’s unfolding future.

I invite you to see the possibility that is all around us. The Spirit is already active in your communities—in relationships of care, in small acts of faithfulness, in conversations that spark new imagination, and in your willingness to keep showing up. These signs of life are not incidental; they are the very places where God is inviting you forward.

Please hear this clearly: you are not alone in this work!

Across the church, at General Council, and Regional Councils, in justice-seeking groups, camps, and communities of faith leaders like you are asking similar questions, navigating similar tensions, and discovering new expressions of ministry. *Toward 2035* is grounded in our connection—in the belief that as we listen to one another across communities, regions, and contexts, we begin to glimpse a shared vision shaped not by uniformity, but by faithful diversity.

You matter deeply in this process—not because you are expected to have all the answers, but because you can create space for faithful questions:

- Where is God already at work here?
- What brings life to our community?
- Who are we being called to become, in this place, at this time?

There is no single path forward. There is only the invitation to be attentive, courageous, and open.

As leaders in your context, you also carry the important task of sharing the message. The way we speak about the present and the future influences how communities respond. When we move from narratives of decline to language of hope and discovery, we open space for new energy to emerge. This doesn't deny struggle—it places it within the larger story of God's faithfulness.

Toward 2035 invites us into that story: A story of becoming Beloved Community—communities that are inspired, resilient, diverse, and deeply connected; communities that reflect Christ's presence in their neighbourhoods; communities that welcome new generations and cultures; communities that trust that transformation is part of discipleship.

This vision will not unfold all at once. It will emerge in small, faithful steps—in listening circles, shared prayers, experiments in ministry, partnerships, and honest conversations.

So, I encourage you:

- **Make space for listening**—to God, to your people, and to your context
- **Celebrate signs of life**, however modest they may seem
- **Resist comparison**—your community's path is uniquely its own
- **Lean into connection**—draw on your neighbour, regional and national supports
- **Trust the Spirit's quiet work**, even when outcomes are not yet visible

Above all, take heart. We are a church grounded in the new life that comes from resurrection—again and again discovering that new life emerges in ways we could not have predicted. Thank you all for your faithfulness, your courage, and your care for the communities you serve. You are part of God's ongoing story, and that story is not finished.

May you be sustained by hope, grounded in love, and guided by the Spirit as together we journey *Toward 2035*.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon McCarthy, Executive Minister

Northern Spirit, Living Skies, and Prairie to Pine Regional Councils.

